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868 The small child is first taught how to speak, beginning with the words for father and mother. Later comes the simple housework, and only then the aforementioned more difficult spheres of work. For the latter the parents on the one hand select those children who exhibit special talents for the one or the other sphere; on the other hand, the educators and parents naturally seek to train the children in those crafts which they themselves as teachers and models have mastered extraordinarily well. One Meau father, for instance, who was an excellent hunter, said to me: "I would have liked to make a hunter out of my oldest boy, but he is only interested in my smithy.

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867 Besides these things which are required to master the material aspects of life, the educators and parents also instruct the children in religion and medicine, since this is not the business of the shaman, as well as manners and good behavior, 869 which is very important in view of the traditional politeness of the Meau! In short, education includes everything that will enable the child to master life later on and to become a respected member of the community. For the rest, all the wishes of the children are complied with as far as possible. To be sure, among the Meau they are not trained to dance, but they are not prevented from dancing.

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861 From earliest childhood punishment and reward are used as a means of education. Disobedient children are reprimanded, and if this does not help, they get a beating, along with references to their duties, up to the age of eight, as parents explained to me. Actually I never saw adults actually beat a child. As a reward, on the other hand, a father may carve a small cross-bow for his eight-year-old son, or, among the Meau, ask the blacksmith to make a small gun for his well-behaved son.

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858 The children are brought up remarkably well. They obey promptly, and one rarely sees it happen that a child has to be punished. The children are treated equitably, but there are always special favorites. As a rule, it is the ailing or weak upon whom /80/ the affection of the parents is obviously bestowed, or upon the youngest, who naturally are also the weakest. The older children do not mind this, and siblings are generally not jealous at all as soon as they have

Akha A04
Miao AE5

/82/

7. Mental Development

A . . . Unfortunately I was unable to test adequately either the
 M children of the Akha or those of the Meau. A number of diffi-
 114 culties blocked this, especially the shortage of porters, which
 125 did not permit moving our test material. Moreover my test
 145 forms were designed for the mental world of primitives and
 could not be applied without further ado to a mountain people
 of Farther India with the mental capacity of the Akha, much
 less that of the Meau. It would have been necessary to revise
 my test forms, but we did not have the time to do this, espe-
 cially since our funds were limited.

A According to our observations, however, the children of
 M the Meau are more highly developed and surpass those of all
 157 the mountain tribes of Further India, including the Akha. Par-
 856 ticularly striking among the Meau is a marked individualism,
 or rather a strong differentiation in comparison with the other
 tribes mentioned, which is already apparent even in small chil-
 dren. At the age of four or five distinct differences of charac-
 A ter and talent are already evident. The Meau children begin
 M to talk when they are one year old, those of the Akha some-
 153 what later; at this age they are already able to say "father"
 856 and "mother" and a few other words. There are, however,
 some gifted children who speak even earlier and some without
 talent who are hardly this far at the age of two. One can
 say, however that at an average age of three and a half years
 the language of the children is almost equal to that of the
 adults.

At the age of two the children are not yet able to eat
 by themselves; they learn this during their third year. The
 A Meau children begin asking questions at the age of five, those
 M of the Akha at the age of six. The children of the Meau do
 153 not bother to think up explanations of their own for things that
 861 are unknown to them, but rather in each and every case ask
 157 their parents or other adults of their community, and in this
 respect they are decidedly vivacious and active. The children
 of the Akha are less persistent in this questioning than those of

AKha AD4

Milo AE5

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[157] the Meau. If they do not receive an adequate or satisfactory answer, they soon go on to something else. They themselves never try to explain unfamiliar things; on the otherhand, /83/ with strangers they are more active and less self-conscious in their questioning than the Meau children, who, to be sure, are curious, but remain shyly in the background.

Most of the children ask many questions, but there are also some who ask few. They want an explanation for everything that is inexplicable to them. They ask why the trees grow, who makes the rice, what kind of spirits there are, why the dog barks, why the father goes hunting, why one hurts himself when he falls down, why birds fly, and so forth. The adults attempt to answer these questions truthfully and to the best of their ability, but sometimes they themselves are at a loss. If they are unable to answer a question, they say: "Oh, you already know more than I do, why do you ask me?"

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145 As far as learning ability is concerned, the Meau children, according to my observations, are extremely gifted; in my estimation, at least up to the age of six they are hardly less gifted than European children of the same age. The Akha children are somewhat less gifted. In all practical aspects and in the use of their bodies, the children of the Meau and Akha are more skillful and especially more persevering and much tougher than children of the Schan /Shan/ and Laoat the same age.

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[871] Comparisons with European children in school could not be made, since in northern Thailand neither the Meau nor Akha children visit any schools. Besides, there were no European children there as a basis for comparison.

8. Art in the Life of Children

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[534] The musical instruments of the adults (see the chapter, "Art," section on "Music and Musical Instruments") are precious and are not given to the children. I could not find any instruments for children, not even any that could be regarded as relics on the path of the development of the art. At most it